Ute Dictionary

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with
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Ute Dictionary
by T. Givón

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In memory of Leonard Cloud Burch

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Preface

This dictionary is a much revised and expanded edition of our earlier undertaking (Givón 1979), incorporating all the lexical materials developed by the original Ute Language Program for the Southern Ute Indian Tribe (1976–1985), as well as the materials developed earlier by James Goss (Goss 1962, 1972). Added vocabulary items were taken from the oral texts published first as *Ute Traditional Narratives* (Givón ed. 1985) and revised and expanded as *Ute Texts* (Givón ed. 2013). In addition, we scoured the Ute vocabularies, most of them from the Uintah and Uncompagre bands, collected by John Wesley Powell (Fowler and Fowler eds 1971) and pulled out all lexical items not listed in our dictionary, provided they were acceptable to fluent speakers. Regrettably, many of the words in Mr. Powell's admirable pioneering work were impossible to interpret, due to his creative orthography. Lastly, we went through the vocabulary lists in Smith's *Ethnography of the Northern Utes* (Smith 1974), a work originally done in the mid-1930s on the No. Ute Reservation, and extracted all vocabulary items not listed in our dictionary, again provided they were acceptable to fluent speakers. We then took the liberty of adjusting the spelling of the Uintah and White River vocabulary gleaned from the Powell and Smith materials to reflect the pronunciation of the southern Ute dialects.

Ute is a Southern Numic language of the Numic – northern-most – group of the Uto-Aztecan family. The major dialect boundary divides the Ute bands into northern vs. southern dialects, grouping the pre-reservation Ute bands as follows:

Northern dialect(s):

Uintah
White River (Yampa)
So. Paiute

Southern dialect(s):

Uncompagre
('aka-páa-gharuʉ-rʉ, pariyʉ-núu-chi-u, tavi-'wa-chi-u,
moghwa-tavi-'wa-chi-u)
Ute Mountain (wíya-ma-núu-chi-u)
Moghwache (moghwa-chi-u)
Capote (kapúuta)
Chemehueve (California)

One may conjecture that the Northern bands spread northward from the confluence of the Colorado and San Juan rivers, up the Kaibab Plateau to Utah Valley and the Uintah mountains. The Southern bands, in turn, proceeded east along the San Juan river and north up its tributaries into the Colorado Rockies (see map, below). The dialect differences among the Ute bands are relatively minor, in the sense that they pose no barrier to mutual intelligibility and fluent communication.

Ideally, vocabularies from the Northern dialects published by Edward Sapir (1930–1931) should have been included in this dictionary. Unfortunately, Sapir's pre-phonemic writing system, used in his Uintah materials from 1909, made the conversion work less than rewarding. In our revised *Ute Texts* (Givón ed. 2013) we included two of Sapir's Uintah texts and one from So. Paiute, with the spelling adjusted to southern-dialect pronunciation. Sapir's So. Paiute materials are much more transparent. But pulling all lexical items out of them, verifying the pronunciation and meaning and converting them to our southern-dialect spelling would have been a monumental task, one we chose, with considerable regret, not to undertake.

The first and most conspicuous core part of a language is its dictionary, where spoken words, or their corresponding written forms, are paired with their meanings. The other core part is grammar, describing the rules that govern the way words are combined into utterances – clauses, sentences and paragraphs. Unlike English, Ute words have a complex internal structure that is part of the grammar. And Ute grammar is much more elaborate than the grammar of English. In the Ute-English entries of this dictionary, a considerable amount of grammatical information is thus provided, information that is absolutely necessary for understanding the use of words in communication.

In order to explain the grammatical information used in our Ute-English entries, and thus the use of Ute words in communication, we included here three introductory chapters, from our *Ute Reference Grammar* (Givón 2011; a revision of Givón 1980). The three chapters cover:

- the Ute sound system and alphabet
- Ute word classes and word structure
- mechanisms for deriving new Ute words from existing words.

The first chapter is straight forward, providing a user-friendly version of Ute phonetics, phonology and orthography. The second covers some core components of Ute grammar, in particularly the classification of verbs according to event participants ('semantic roles'), grammatical roles ('case roles') and the structure of simple verbal clauses. This grammatical information compensates,

to some extent, for our decision not to include illustrative usage examples in most entries. While we admire the grand sweep of dictionaries that include such usage information (e.g., Hopi Dictionary Project 1998), we lack the time and resources to follow their splendid example.

The third chapter underscores one crucial fact about dictionaries in general, and about our Ute dictionary in particular: A dictionary is a living, evolving, historical organism. It is not only a compendium of the current state of words, their pronunciation, meaning(s) and usage, but also an account, however implicit and sketchy, of how the words got to be they way they are now; how new word-senses evolved out of older senses; and how new words have been coined from older words. Put another way, a dictionary is not only a description of the current cultural world-view of the speech community, but also of how this cultural world-view evolved gradually over historical time. While not pushing this historical aspect too hard, it nonetheless inspired the way this dictionary is organized.

Like all living languages, Ute is an organism forever in the midst of ongoing **change**, in pronunciation, in grammar, and – most relevant here – in vocabulary. And ongoing change means current usage **variation**, so that the same word may be pronounced a bit differently by different speakers, or have a slightly different range of meanings. To the extent possible and whenever warranted, we have attempted to document such variation in both sound and meaning. A small part of the change and variation in the Ute lexicon is contact-induced, resulting from cultural borrowing from Spanish or English. Such borrowed items have had remarkably little impact on Ute phonology or grammar. Rather, borrowed items have been readily absorbed into regular native patterns.

Many people contributed over the years to the process of assembling this dictionary. First among them were members of the original Ute Language Committee for the Southern Ute Tribe (1976–1985): Edna Russell Baker, Loraine Cloud Baker, Annie Bettini, Fritz Box, Frances Buck, Mollie Buck Cloud, Julius Cloud, Ralph Nash Cloud, Neil Buck Cloud, Annabelle Eagle, Bertha Burch Groves, Martha Burch Myore, Eva Taylor O'John, Georgia McKinley Pinnecoose, Patricia Rael, Sunshine Cloud Smith, Euterpe Taylor, LaVeta Vigil. All were volunteers who invested their time, knowledge and hopes in trying to preserve their language. All but three are not with us anymore. *'ichay tʉvʉrʉvwan ká-miya'ni-wa-tʉtʉ̲*.

During the early years of the project, many other Ute speakers contributed words or stories to our project: Renee Cloud Baca, Naomi Red Bajarano, Levy "Dusty" Baker, Eddie Box, Sr., Kenneth Burch, Ernestine Burch, Jack Frost, Lillie Frost, Stanley Frost, Essie Kent, Isobel Kent, Harry Richards, Mellie

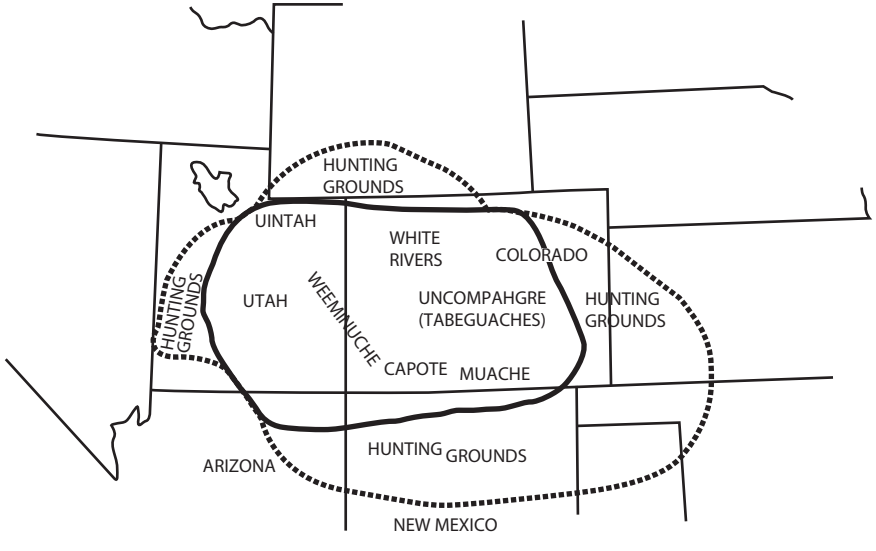
Baker Santistevan, Darlene Frost Vigil, Daisie Watts, Ellen and Max Watts, John Williams. Others helped over the years in more subtle ways: Everett Burch, Hanley Frost, Bradley Hight, Alden Naranjo, Jr., Dorothy Frost Naranjo, Douglas Remington, Bennett Cloud Thompson.

Three tribal elders have spent much of the past two years helping me revise this work, in effect appointing themselves as the Ute Dictionary Committee: Pearl Casías, Mary Inez Cloud and Vida Baker Peabody. They made the task both doable and enjoyable. Whatever faults and glitches that may have found their way into this book remain entirely my own.

This book is dedicated to the memory of Leonard Cloud Burch, longtime Chairman of the Southern Ute Tribal Council, whose vision and wisdom figured prominently in making possible the original Ute Language Program (1976–1985), and who steadfastly supported the work that has culminated, many years later, in this book. *ʉʌʋchį̄ toghoy-aqh*, *ʉʇʉʌʋ-gaʌʋ-n*.

T. Givón
White Cloud Ranch
Ignacio, Colorado
March 2015

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF THE UTE-SPEAKING BAND



THE UTE DOMAIN (till 1870's)

Foreword to the first edition

In the summer of 1975, the Southern Ute Tribal Council authorized the start of the Ute Language Program. Our language had been retreating slowly, our young people had ceased to learn it. Unless something was done soon, we felt, the Ute language was in grave danger of disappearing from the face of the earth. No people can maintain their identity without a language, the vehicle of their thoughts, dreams and aspirations. If we are to remain Ute, *Núuchi-u*, we must protect out language from dying out, we must help it regain its rightful place in our lives and in the hearts and minds of our people, especially our young.

Our first task was to gain an accurate description of the language as it is spoken, meaning an alphabet, a dictionary, a grammar book and a story collection. On such a description we could then base any future work of teaching and maintaining the language. This book represents the first tangible results of our Ute Language Program. It is the product of cooperation between the Ute Language Committee and our tribal linguist, and I would like to congratulate them all on their efforts, dedication and fine work.

This dictionary is but a beginning, it is not a final product. We hope that it will stimulate discussion, debate, and the interest of our people in our Ute language. We hope that it will draw comments, corrections and suggestions, so that it may become a firm foundation upon which we can build further; so that the next edition of our Ute dictionary will be more accurate and complete.

We would like to share the work we have done here with our brothers and sisters on the Ute Mountain and Northern Ute reservations. We speak the same language, we are the same people. Ultimately, our language should be written down as one language for the entire Ute nation, so that it may live in the hearts and minds of our children and their children after them, just as it lived in the hearts and minds of our fathers and their fathers before them.

Leonard C. Burch, Chairman
Southern Ute Tribal Council
August 1979

Namu-máy-vaa-tʉ

'icha-'ara Núu-'apagha-pi 'áa-pə'ə-kwa-tʉ 'ura-'ay. Pa'a-kách-'ura-'uru pə'ə-ta-na-aqh púupa Núu-chi-'uru tʉvʉchi 'apagha-na-y. 'áavʉ-'ura Núu-'apagha-pi nasu'a-rʉga-kwa-y, tawi-gya-aqh tua-chi-u-vaa-chugwa-av-'uru ká-wáygya-wa-tʉ-mʉ. Togho-sapa-'ura Núu-'apagha-pi ma'ay-ta-vaa-chi-sapa, míya-tukhwa miya-'ni-vee-chi-sapa.

Nʉmʉy-gya Núu-'apagha-pi pə'ə-kwa-paa-chi tʉ́ʉ-'ásti-kya-y, kh-'ura-'uru 'umʉ míimi-pʉ-chi-u puchuchugwa-qha-paa-ku, súuva-tʉ-mʉ-aa-ni Núu-chi-u pʉ-pʉnikya-vaa-ku, pu-puchuchugwa-vaa-ku, náagha-tʉ-ravay 'umʉsʉ-ga 'úu-pani-sapa pə'ə-khwa-paa-tʉ-mʉ 'ura-'ay, kh-'ura púupa-aqh Núu-chi 'atʉ-wáygya-na-av ká-sumua-qha-ta-wa-tʉ 'ura-'ay.

'ícha-'ara namu-pə'ə-kwa-tʉ 'ura-'ay, súuva-tʉ-ni piya-yis 'ura-vaa-tʉ. Súuva-tʉ-mʉ-ni Núu-chi-u Núu-'apagha-nay-av piyəmichi-kya-yis. Ma-vaa-tʉ nʉmʉy-gya tʉ́ʉ-'ásti-kya-y 'umʉ-'uru 'ichay pə'ə-kwa-tʉ pʉ́ka-tʉsu'a-qha-paa-ku.

'áavʉ-'ura tʉvʉchi Núu-waygya-rʉ-mʉ ká-'ava'na-wa-tʉ-mʉ miya-'ni, náagha-tʉ-ravay ká-miya-'ni-vaa-wa-tʉ-mʉ 'ura-'ay. Togho-sapa-'ura nʉ́mʉ-'uru-aqh pə'ə-kwa-y, kh-'ura Núu-'apagha-pi ká-ma'ay-vaa-tʉ 'ura-'ay.

Núu-wáygya-rʉ-mʉ

First word

This is our new Ute Language book. The way our language is to be properly spoken has never before been put in writing. Our language is fading away, we don't speak it to our children any more. For this reason it may be soon lost, it may go away.

We have resolved to write our language down, so that the young ones may learn it, so that other Utes may see and learn too, and may some day write it this way, so that the way Ute is to be properly spoken may not be forgotten.

This is only the first book, others will follow. Other Utes love their language too, so we can only hope they may find this book to their liking.

There are only few good speakers of our language left, some day they too will be gone. This is why we are writing it down, so that the Ute language will not be lost.

Ute Language Committee
Southern Ute Tribe
August 1979

PART I

Introductory materials

CHAPTER 1

Sound system and writing

1.1. Sounds and writing

This chapter presents a description of the **speech sounds** (phonemes) of Ute, together with their most common phonetically-predictable variants (allophones). It is intended as a practical guide to reading and pronouncing Ute words, rather than as a full-fledged phonological treatment. If the latter is ever to be undertaken, it should be in large part historical, given that the sound system of Ute, like that of all languages, reflects layers upon layers of past and still-ongoing sound change.[1]

Simultaneously, this chapter also presents the **writing system** (alphabet) adopted for Ute. This orthography is a compromise between phonemic, phonetic and practical considerations. We have chosen to mark phonetically-predictable variants (allophones) with distinct letters or two-letter combinations when their pronunciation appears distinct to the ears of speakers and learners. And our choice of particular letters or two-letter combinations is designed to accommodate the phonetic and keyboard habits and of people whose first written language is English.[2]

1.2. Vowels

1.2.1. Ute vowels and their pronunciation

Vowel sounds are typically open and resonant, with no narrow obstruction of the air-flow at the point of articulation. They are produced, typically, with

---

1. A well-known example, Chomsky and Halle's (1968), was an unintended recapitulation of the historical phonology of English, recast as synchronic ordered rules.

2. The primary language of education and literacy on the three Ute reservations is English. Over the years, various alphabets have been introduced on the three reservations. The one used here is adapted from our earlier *Ute Dictionary* (Givón 1979).

the vocal cords vibrating, although Ute vowels can also be silent – de-voiced, whispered – in many contexts. Ute vowels can be classified by three articulatory features:

- point of articulation
- tongue height
- lip rounding

Table 1 below presents the inventory of Ute vowels, with phonetically-predictable variants (allophones) given in square brackets. The frontal point of articulation for vowels is, roughly, at the palatal level and the back point of articulation is at the velar level. The central point of articulation is mid-way between those two. Back vowels are most commonly rounded unless otherwise indicated. Front and central vowels are most commonly unrounded unless otherwise indicated.

Table 1. Ute vowels

point of articulation					
front	**front-rounded**	**central**	**back-unrounded**	**back**	**tongue height**
i			ʉ	u	**high**
	ɵ			[o]	**mid**
[e]					
		a			**low**

In the space below, these vowels are described, and examples of common Ute words that contain them are given. Whenever possible, pronunciation hints from English, Spanish or other languages are given.

/i/ (high front vowel)

This vowel is pronounced roughly like the English vowel is 's**ee**', 'pl**ea**se' or 'Lou**i**se', and can be either long or short. It can be seen in Ute words such as:

(1)

sí-gya-rʉ̲	'grey'
kan**i**-gya-tʉ̲	'home owner'
m**íi**-pʉ-ch**i̲**	'a small one'
'uni-**'n**i	'being/doing/going'
p**íi**schi-u	'children'

/u/ (high back rounded vowel)

This vowel is pronounced roughly like the English vowel in 'st**u**pid', 'sh**oo**t' of 'r**ou**ge', and can be either long or short. It may be found in Ute words such as:

(2) t**ú**u-kwa-r**ʉ** 'black'
t**uu**-g**wa**-t**ʉ** 'tough', aggressive', 'mean'
kam**u**-ch**i** 'hare'
n**úu**chi-**u** 'people', 'Indians', 'Utes'
k**u**cu-p**u**k**u** 'cow'
p**u**k**u**-gwa-t**ʉ** 'horse-owner'

/ʉ/ (high back unrounded vowel)

This vowel does not exist in English but is the most common vowel in Ute. In may be found in Ute words such as:

(3) t**ʉ́ʉ**-'ay 'it is good'
'ʉʉ 'yes'
kar**ʉ**-'nap**ʉ** 'chair'
t**ʉ**g**ʉ**-v**ʉ**-n 'my friend'
t**ʉ**p**ʉ**y-ch**i** 'rock'
káa-p**ʉ**ga '(s/he) sang'
k**ʉ**r**ʉ**ki '(s/he) is getting up'

/a/ (low central vowel)

This vowel is pronounced roughly like the English vowel in 'f**a**ther', 'c**a**r', 'J**o**hn' or 't**o**p'. It may be found in Ute words such as:

(4) s**á**-gh**a**-r**ʉ** 'white'
'ak**a**-gh**a**-r**ʉ** 'red'
m**a**m**a**-ch**i** 'woman'
m**áa**m**a**-chi-u 'women'
t**áa**-ta'w**a**-chi-u 'men'
'áap**a**-ch**i** 'boy'

[e] (mid-low front vowel)

This vowel is a predictable variant of **/a/**, and is marked only occasionally in our orthography. Younger speakers pronounce it as in the English words 'm**e**n' or 'g**e**t'. Older speakers most commonly use a variant that resembles more the vowel in English words 'c**a**t', 'n**a**p, or 'm**a**n'. The phonetic environment that most commonly conditions this variant of /a/ is proximity to the front vowels /i/ or /o-/ or the glide /y/, most commonly preceding but sometimes following /a/. Examples of Ute words with this variant of /a/ are:

(5)	**phonetic variant**		**underlying phonemic form**
	kani-gy**e**-tʉ	‘home owner’	kani-gya-tʉ
	sina**e**-vi	‘wolf’	sinaa-vi
	ná**e**-vi	‘teenage girl’	náa-vi
	'ini-ky**e**-tʉ	‘made’	**'**ini-kya-tʉ
	'ɵe-qarʉ	‘yellow’ (inan.)	**'ɵa**-qa-rʉ
	'ura-**'e**y	‘is’	**'**ura-**'**ay
	kani-v**ee**-tʉ	‘at the house’	kani-vaa-tʉ

/ɵ/ (front mid rounded vowel)

This is vowel was historically a predicted variant of [**o**] (see below), but that situation has been reversed so that nowadays **/ɵ/** is the more common variant and [**o**] is its predictable allophone in restricted phonetic contexts. The vowel /ɵ/ is not found in English, but can be seen in French, as in ***feu*** (‘fire’), or in German, as in *m**oe**glich* (‘possible’). It is either short or long, and can be found in Ute words such as:

(6)		
	p**ɵ'ɵ**-kwa-tʉ	‘book’
	'ɵtɵ-kwa-rʉ	‘yellow’
	'ɵɵ-vi	‘bone’
	'ɵ́a-vʉ	‘salt’
	pɵ́ɵ	‘path’
	m**ɵ**ch**ɵ**-pʉ	‘moustache’

[**o**] (back mid vowel)

This vowel is a phonetically-predictable variant of **/ɵ/**. It is pronounced roughly as in the English words ‘d**oo**r’, ‘f**ou**r’ or ‘m**o**re’, and can be either short or long. It appears only before or after the back consonants [gh], [q] or [qh],[3] as in the Ute words:

(7)		
	t**o**gh**o**y-aqh	‘it is good’, ‘thanks’
	t**o**gh**o**a-vi	‘rattle-snake’
	qh**o**qh	‘bull-snake’
	'agh**o**-chi	‘dish’
	'aqh**o**-tʉ	‘thick’

Since the two variants [o] and /ɵ/ are strikingly different to both the ear and the palate of speakers, we have elected to mark both in our Ute orthography.

3. The distributional statement of [q]/[qh]/[gh] vis-a-vis [o] is somewhat circular, since one of the two conditioning environments of [q]/[qh] or [gh], all phonetically predictable variants of /k/ or /g/, respectively, is the phonetic environments before or after [o]. While this may be a conundrum for theoretical phonology, it will not concern us here.

1.2.2. Long vs. short vowels

Ute vowels can be either short (single vowel) or long (double vowel), and the difference is significant for meaning and thus is marked in our writing system. The difference between long and short vowels is independent of whether the vowels are stressed or unstressed (see below). In some cases, one gets minimal pairs marked solely by vowel length. In others, it is just a phonetic contrast. Consider:

(8)

short vowel		long vowel	
whc**a**-y	'wrapping'	whc**aa**-y	'swirling'
m**á**y-kya	'said'	m**aa**y-kya	'found',
s**á**-gha-r**ʉ**	'white'	s**áa**-gha-r**ʉ**	'raw'
p**i**wa-n	'my spouse'	p**íi**schi-u	'boys'
t**ʉ**g**ʉ**v**ʉ**-n	'my friend'	t**úʉ**-'a-t**ʉ**	'good'
'ʉrʉ-ch**i**	'spirit of the dead'	**'ʉʉ**	'yes'
'ɵtɵ-kwa-r**ʉ**	'brown'	**'ɵɵ**-v**i**	'bone'
'uru	'it', 'that' (obj.)	**'úu**-pa	'that-a-way'

1.2.3. Stressed vs. unstressed vowels

Ute vowels are either stressed or unstressed, and at least one vowel in each word must be stressed. The obligatory word-stress can appear in only two positions in the word:

- second vowel of the word (most common; left unmarked in our orthography)
- first vowel of the word (much less common; marked in our orthography)

Examples of these two stress patterns are:

(9)

second-vowel stress		first-vowel stress	
'aá-v**ʉ**-n	'my upper arm'	**'á**av**ʉ**-n	'now I…'
t**ɵ**ó-v**ʉ**-n	'my hind quarter'	t**ó**ɵ-v**ʉ**-n	'my thigh/lap'
pag**ʉ́**	'fish'	p**ágʉ**	'trout'
suw**a**-	'almost'	s**ú**wa-	'straight out'
mam**á**-ch**i**	'woman'	m**á**am**a**-chi-u	'women'
sar**í**-ch**i**	'dog'	s**í**-gwana-ch**i**	'hawk'
puk**ú**-n	'my horse'	p**úkʉ**	'horse'
togh**ó**y	'straight', 'good'	qh**ó**qh	'bull-snake'
n**ʉ**kw**i**	'running'	pagha-n**ú**kw**i**	'leaving in a hurry'
pagh**a**y-**'**way	'walking'	p**á**gh**a**-kwa-y	'taking off'

In some of the minimal pairs above, the two words are semantically related, and some grammatical processes may create more such pairs.[4]

In compound words, made out of two or more word stems, we mark the first-vowel stress in the non-initial word-stem too, since it is reflected in the pronunciation. Thus consider:

(10)

initial stress	initial stress in compound
núu-chi̲ 'person', 'Ute'	'aka-núu-chi̲ 'Red Ute' (personal name)
'áapa-chi̲ 'boy'	'ʉvʉ-'áapa-chi̲ 'bad boy'
máama̲-chi-u 'women'	núu-máama̲-chi-u 'Ute women'

1.2.4. Silent vowels

In many environments, some phonological, other grammatical, Ute vowels are de-voiced; that is, silenced or whispered. The historical origin of this feature was no doubt phonetic, and the most common environments are still those of unstressed or de-stressed vowels at the word-final position, or unstressed vowels between voiceless consonants such as /p/, /t/, /k/,/s/ or /ch/. But other phonetic environments are also known to silence vowels. Typical examples are:

(11)

voiced vowel		silent vowel	
pu̲ku-n	'my horse'	púku̲	'horse'
kani-vee-tu̲	'at the house'	káni̲	'house'
pa̲cha-n	'my shoe'	pácha̲	'shoe'
máama̲-chi-u	'women'	mama-chi̲	'woman'
tu̲ka-'napʉ-vwa-n	'on the table'	tu̲ka-'napʉ̲	'table'

Older speakers still whisper such silent vowels, so that when listening carefully and watching the speaker's lips, one can tell which vowel is being whispered. It is clear that one could not dispense with writing the underlying vowel when it is silent, since it is still lurking there and may come back to life.

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4. First-syllable reduplication of both nouns and verbs, an old pluralizing device in Ute, combined with de-voicing of unstressed vowels between voiceless consonants, may yield stress-dependent minimal pairs such as:

simple	reduplicate (older speakers)	reduplicate (younger speakers)
pʉnikya- 'see'	pu̲-pʉni̲kya-	pʉ́ni̲kya 'see repeatedly'
tʉga- 'approach'	tu̲-tʉga-	tʉ́ga- 'approach repeatedly'
chi̲pi- 'climb'	chi̲-chipi-	chípi̲- 'climb here & there'

When an unstressed silent vowel follows sonorous consonants such as /n/, /w/, /y/ or /r/, it is often pronounced as a breathy [h]. Thus compare:

(12)

underlying vowel	breathy silent-vowel pronunciation
ní-n**h**ka-y 'dancing all over'	n**h**ka-y 'dancing'
pagha-'n**i** 'walking about'	pagha-'n**h**-kya '(s/he) walked about'
pʉní**k**ya 'see'	pʉpʉ́n**h**-kya 'see here and there'
w**ú**-w**h**chaa-y 'swirl on and on'	w**h**caa-y 'swirl'
pagha-n**ú**kw**u̲** 'take off'	págha-n**h**kwi-chaa-n 'I'm off'
tama-r**i** 'it is spring'	tama-r**h**-kya 'it became spring'
navay**i** 'be divided'	navay**h**-tʉ-mʉ̲ 'mixed-blood person'

In some cases, mostly following a word-initial /w/, no variation is available to help identify the underlying value of the silent vowel. In such cases, we use the letter [h] to mark the silent vowel.

The contrast between voiced vs. silent vowels is used systematically in one important grammatical context in Ute – to mark the difference between the subject (also predicate) and non-subject (object, possessor) forms of nouns and noun-modifiers. The subject/predicate form for most nouns has a silent final vowel. The non-subject form has the fully voiced vowel. With nouns that have no inherent noun suffix, the last vowel of the stem may show this variation. Thus consider:

(13) a. **Subject**:
'ích**a̲** kán**i̲** tʉ́ʉ-'a-tʉ̲ 'this house is good'
this/**S** house/**S** good/PRED

b. **Predicate**:
'ích**a̲**-'ara kán**i̲** 'ura-'ay 'this is a house'
this/**S**-be house/**PRED** be-IMM

c. **Object**:
'ich**a**-y kan**i** 'ásti-'i '(I) want this house'
this/**O** house/**O** want-IMM

d. **Post-positional object**:
kan**i**-naagh**a̲**-tukhw**a̲** yʉga-pʉga '(s/he) entered (into) the house/**O**-in-to enter-REM house'

e. **Possesor**:
kan**i** yʉʉruwa-pʉ̲ 'the house's door'
house/**POS** door-S

Most Ute nouns come with an inherent noun suffix, and it is the word-final suffix vowel that most commonly displays the grammatical voicing variation:

(14) a. **Subject**:
'áapa-chi 'u 'avatʉ-mʉ 'ura-'ay 'the boy is big'
land-**S** the/**S** big-AN/PRED be-IMM

b. **Predicate**:
'ína-'ara 'áapa-chi 'ura-'ay 'this (one) is a boy'
this/**S**-be boy-PRED be-IMM

c. **Object**:
'aapa-chi 'uway pʉnikya-pʉga '(s/he) saw the boy'
land-**O** the/**O** see-REM

d. **Post-positional object**:
'áapa-chi-wa wʉ́ʉka-pʉga '(s/he) worked with the boy'
land-**O**-with work-REM

e. **Possessed**:
'áapa-chi kání 'the boy's house'
boy-**POS** house/S

1.3. Ute consonants and their pronunciation

1.3.1. Inventory of Ute consonants

Consonants are typically more closed and less sonorous articulations, as compared to vowels. In Ute, they can be defined by three main articulatory features:

- **Point of articulation**: the fixed point along the palate, upper teeth or upper lip at which the moving part – either the tongue or the lower teeth or lip – makes a full or partial closure of the air stream;
- **Voicing**: whether the glottis (voice box) vibrates (voiced) or does not vibrate (voiceless) during the articulation of the consonant; and
- **Manners of articulation**:
  - **Degree of closure**: whether the closure at the point of articulation is full (stop), or partial (fricative), or both in order (affricate).
  - **Nasality**: Whether the air stream goes out only through the oral cavity, (oral consonant), or simultaneously through both the oral and nasal cavity (nasal consonant), i.e., with the epiglottis held open.
  - **Gliding**: Whether the tongue is moving toward or away from the point of articulation during the articulation (glide).

Both nasal and glide consonants in Ute are voiced by default.

Table 2. below lists all Ute consonants according to their articulatory features. Consonants that are predictable variants (allophones) are given in square brackets.

Table 2. Ute consonants

	position of articulation					
manner	**labial**	**dental**	**palatal**	**velar**	**uvular**	**glottal**
voiceless stop	p	t	ch	k	[q]	'
voiceless fric.		s		[kh]	[qh]	
voiced fric.	v	r		g	[gh]	
nasal	m	n				
glide	w		y			

/p/ (voiceless bi-labial stop)
/v/ (voiced bi-labial fricative)

The consonant /p/ is pronounced as in English '**p**oor', 'ta**p**ing' or 'ho**p**'. It can be seen in Ute words such as:

(15)

páa	'water'
'áa**p**a-chi̲	'boy'
tʉvʉ-**p**ʉ̲	'earth'
pía-n	'my mother'
púku̲	'horse'
'ipi-chi̲	'red clay used for body painting'

Historically, this consonant used to be found only in word-initial positions, alternating with **/v/** in mid-word (inter-vocalic) positions. The consonant /v/ is pronounced as the /b/ and /v/ in inter-vocalic positions in Spanish, as in words such a *ha**b**as* or *la **v**erdad*. Traces of the old predictable old [p]/[v] variation can be still found in examples such as:

(16)

initial/voiceless		**medial/voiced**	
pía-pi̲	'female'	kava-**v**ía-pi̲ horse-female	'mare'
pagʉ	'fish/trout'	sá-**v**agʉ red-fish	'white fish'
pʉ́a-n	'my kin'	núu-**v**ʉ́-a-n Ute-kin-my	'my Ute kin'

However, at both word-medial and word-final (before a silent final vowel) both /p/ and /v/ are now found, and can indeed form minimal pairs. Thus compare:

(17)

voiceless	voiced
'i**p**i-chi̲ 'red clay'	'ivi-chi̲ 'stick'
'áa**p**a-chi̲ 'boy'	'áa**v**as 'haba beans' (Sp.)
pía-**p**i̲ 'female'	pa'a-**v**i̲ 'insect'
páa-**p**ʉ̲ 'blood'	'áa**v**ʉ̲ 'now'
'úu-**p**a 'that-a-way' (invis.)	ma-**v**aa 'there' (vis.)
nana-**p**ʉ-chi̲ 'little old man'	mama-saghoy-**v**ʉ-chi̲ 'little old woman'

/t/ (voiceless dental stop)
/r/ (voiced dental tap)

The consonant /t/ is pronounced as in English '**t**ick', '**t**en**t**' or 'pa**t**'. It can be seen in the Ute words such as:

(18)

tua-chi-n	'my child'
tʉi-yʉ̲	'deer'
'ava**t**ʉ̲	'big'
tíi	'high'
ma**t**a-chi̲	'tick'
táa	'shirt'
'ɵ**t**ɵ-kwa-rʉ̲	'brown'
toghoy-aqh	'it is good'

Like /p/, /t/ used to appear, historically, only in word-initial positions, and alternated with /r/ in mid-word (inter-vocalic) positions. To this day, /r/ is not found at the beginning of words. The Ute /r/ is pronounced like the non-initial Spanish /r/ in words such as *para* ('for') or *volver* ('return'). Typical Ute examples are:

(19)

sa**r**i-chi̲	'dog'
Núu-ma**r**oghoma-pʉga-tʉ̲	'The Creator'
sá-gha-**r**ʉ̲	'white' (inan.)
ka**r**i	'(s/he) is sitting'

Traces of the old allophonic variation are still seen in examples such as:

(20)

initial/voiceless		medial/voiced	
tuachi̲	'child'	núu-**r**uachi̲	'baby'
tʉi-yʉ̲	'deer'	sá-**r**ʉi-yʉ̲	'white deer'
táa	'shirt'	'aka-**r**áa	'red shirt'

Like the /p/-/v/ alternation, above, /t/ and /r/ can both appear, and thus contrast, in word-medial and word-final positions, suggesting that the old predictable variation has become partially phonemic. Thus compare:

(21)

voiceless		voiced	
ma-vaa-**t**ukhwa̲	'that way' (vis.)	ma-vaa-**rʉ**khwa̲	'down there' (vis.)
'ava-**t**ʉ̲	'big'	pana-qa-**r**ʉ̲	'money'
túu-**t**áa	'black coat'	'aka-**r**áa	'red shirt'

/**k**/ (voiceless velar stop)
/**g**/ (voiced velar fricative)

The consonant /k/ is pronounced just like its English counterparts in '**c**old', '**k**iss', 'brea**k**', 'pa**ck**age' or 'Ma**c**'. It can be found in Ute words such as:

(22)

káni̲	'house'
'a**k**a-gha-rʉ̲	'red' (inan.)
pu**k**u-n	'my horse'
ku̲chu-puku̲	'cow'

Historically, /k/ used to appear only in word-initial positions, alternating with its voiced counterpart /g/ in medial (inter-vocalic) positions. Traces of the old alternation can be still found in examples like:

(23)

initial		medial	
kani̲	'house'	núu-**g**ani̲	'tipi'
kwana-chi̲	'eagle'	sí-**g**wana-chi̲	'hawk' (lit. 'grey eagle')
kava	'horse'	sá-**g**ava	'white horse'

The consonant /g/ still cannot appear in word-initial positions. It is not a stop but a fricative, thus pronounced as in the Spanish words *pa**g**ar* ('pay') or *lue**g**o* ('then').

[**kh**] (voiceless velar fricative)

This consonant is one of a series of velar or uvular fricatives that are predictable variants of /k/ or /g/ (see below). Its distribution is restricted to a number of word-final contexts, as consequence of the de-voicing of final vowels. This sound does not exist in either English or Spanish. It can be found in Ute in words such as:

(24)

ma-vaa-tu**kh**wa̲	'in that direction' (vis.)
'uwa-vaa-chu**kh**wa̲	'towards him/her' (invis.)
kani 'u-rʉ**kh**wa̲	'under the house' (invis.)

[**q**] (voiceless uvular stop)
[**qh**] (voiceless uvular fricative or affricate)
[**gh**] (voiced uvular fricative)

These three consonants are predictable phonetic variants (allophones) of /k/ or /g/. None of them exist in English or Spanish, but the two fricatives, [qh] and [gh], can be found in either German (***ach***) or French (*Paris*), respectively. The two voiceless consonants, [q] and [qh], are both predictable phonetic variants (allophone) of /k/, in two separate phonetic environments:

(25) **Predictable phonetic conditions for velarization**:
- between two vowels /a/ (a---a).
- before or after the vowel [o] (o--- or ---o)

The voiced velar consonant [gh] is a predictable phonetic (allophonic) variant of /g/ (see (25) above). However, its voicing, much like the voicing of /g/, is not fully predictable. Like other voiced stops in Ute, it cannot appear in word-initial positions. But in word-medial positions it can now contrast with [qh]/[q]. Examples of these three consonants in Ute words are:

(26)

pana-**q**a-rʉ	'shining', 'money'
'aka-**gh**a-rʉ	'red'
sá-**gh**a-rʉ	'white' (inan.)
sá-**qh**a-**q**a-tʉ-mʉ	'white' (an., pl.)
pa**gh**a-**'**ni	'walking about'
qó**qh**	'bull-snake'
to**gh**oy-a**qh**	'it's good'
to**gh**oa-vi	'rattle-snake'
'agho-ci	'dish'
Núu-maro**gh**oma-pʉga-tʉ	'the Creator'

Since to both the ear and the mouth of Ute speakers these uvular consonants are rather striking, and since they are found in many high-frequency words and grammatical morphemes, we have elected to mark them in our orthography.

/ch/ (voiceless palatal stop)

This consonant is pronounced as its English counterpart in words such as '**ch**urch', '**ch**ild', or '**ch**ieve'. It can be found in Ute words such as:

(27)

mama-**ch**i	'woman'
chaqha-**ch**i-n	'my younger brother'
wi**ch**i-**ch**i	'bird'
wii-**ch**i	'knife'
mə**ch**ə-pʉ	'facial hair', 'moustache'
chúu-**ch**i	'pipe'

/'/ (glottal stop)

This consonant doesn't exist in English or Spanish, but is very common in Ute. To begin with, all Ute words that to the untrained ear sound as if they begin with a vowel in fact begin with a glottal stop, as in:

(28)	'áapa-chi̲	'boy'
	'aka-gha-rʉ̲	'red'
	'ipi-chi̲	'red clay used as body paint'
	'úu-pa	'that-a-way' (invis.)
	'ʊʊ-vi̲	'bone'
	'ʉʉ	'yes'

Some people may thus elect not to mark /'/ in this word-initial position on grounds of total predictability. However, Ute phonology is fairly close to the idealized CVCV syllable structure, once the de-voicing of vowels and related historical changes are taken into account.[5] Not marking word-initial /'/ would obscure this otherwise strong regularity. Further, in many environments /'/ is not predictable, and must be marked, as in:

(29)	pagha-'ni	'walking about', 'being alive'
	paghay-'way	'walking'
	'ura-'ay	'being'
	pʉni-'ni	'looking'
	pa'a-manuni	'completely', 'all'
	ta'wa-chi̲	'man'

What is more, in many instances one finds minimal pairs where the meaning depends on the presence vs. absence of a glottal stop. Thus compare:

(30)	**no glottal stop**		**with glottal stop**	
	'ʊa-qa-rʉ̲	'yellow'	'ʊ'a-ka-y	'sneaking on someone'
	kʉi	'taking'	kʉ'i	'biting'
	tapʊni	'be bound together'	tapo-'ni	'knocking'
	maay	'finding'	ma'ay	'being lost'
	pʉi-n	'I'm sleeping'	pʉ'i–n	'my eye'

/s/ (voiceless dental fricative)

This consonant is pronounced like its English counterpart in words such as 'sit', masses', 'boss', 'past', or 'kiss'. It may be seen in Ute words such as:

---

5. There is both etymological and synchronic evidence that suffixal sequences such as *-ni-'i*, *-na-'a*, *-wa-'a or -ma-'a* have changed into *-'ni*, *-'na*, *-'wa* or -'ma, respectively, probably through de-voicing of the first vowel into the unstable intermediates *-n'i*, *-n'a*, *-w'a* or -m'a-, respectively.

(31) **s**ari-ch**i̲** ‘dog’
múus**a**-ch**i̲** ‘cat’
sá-gha-r**ʉ̲** ‘white’ (inan.)
sí-gwana-ch**i̲** ‘hawk’
ma-**sʉʉ**-v**ʉ**-n ‘my finger(s)’

/m/ (labial nasal)

This Ute consonant is pronounced like its English counterpart. It can be seen in Ute words such as:

(32) **m**a**m**a-ch**i̲** ‘woman’
míi-p**ʉ**-ch**i̲** ‘small’ (an.)
ˈʉ́mʉ̲ ‘you’
múusa-ch**i̲** ‘cat’
mɵchɵ-p**ʉ̲** ‘mustache’

/n/ (dental nasal)

This Ute consonant is pronounced much like its counterpart in English. It can be seen in Ute words such as:

(33) **n**a**n**ap**ʉ**-ch**i̲** ‘little old man’
ˈína̲** ‘this’ (an.)
nʉ́**ˈ** ‘I’
núu-ch**i̲** ‘person’, ‘Indian’, ‘Ute’

/w/ (labial glide)

This Ute consonant is pronounced like its counterpart in English. It can be seen in Ute words such as:

(34) **w**é-ini ‘two’ (subj.)
wíi-t**ʉ**-s ‘long time ago’
ˈuwa-s ‘s/he’ (invis.)
ka**w**a-ch**i̲** ‘frost’
ma**w**is**i̲**-p**ʉg**a ‘(he/she) appeared’
wii-ch**i̲** ‘knife’

/y/ (palatal glide)

This Ute consonant is pronounced much like its counterpart in English. It can be seen in Ute words such as:

(35)

yogho-vʉ-chi̲	'coyote'
tugu-paya	'sky', 'upward'
yáakwi	'sinking'
toghoy-aqh	'thank you', 'it is good'
tʉi-yʉ	'deer' (obj.)

1.3.2. Labialization and palatalization

In addition to the phonemic consonant /w/, Ute also has a predictable process of **labialization**, whereby the glide [w] is inserted behind the consonants /k/, /g/ or /v/, yielding /kw/, /gw/ or /vw/, respectively. The context for this change is when the consonant follows the vowels /u/, /ʊ/ or [o], and sometimes also /ʉ/. This process is most conspicuous in the case of the suffixes /-ka/ (plural, anterior) and /-ga/ ('have', participle). In the same way, if /-ka/ or /-ga/ follow the vowel /i/, the glide [y] is inserted after the consonant, yielding /-kya/ or /-gya/, respectively; that is, **palatalization**.[6] Thus compare:

(36) a. **With the plural verb-suffix /-ka/**

kʉʉ-ka-y	'(they) are picking up'
káa-qha-y	'(they) are singing'
tʉsu-kwa-y	'(they) are grinding'
pʊ'ʊ-kwa-y	'(they are writing'
'ini-kya-y	'(they) are doing'

b. **With the verb 'have' /-ga-/**

puwa-gha-tʉ̲	'person with spiritual power'
'ʉnʉ-pʉ-ga-tʉ̲	'mad person'
puku-gwa-tʉ̲	'horse-person'
pʊ́ʊ-gwa-tʉ̲	'person with a path'
kani-gye-tʉ̲	'home-owner'

Similar labialization and palatalization are also found with the suffix **-va(a)**, as in:

(37) a. **With the locative suffix /-vaa/:**

ma-vaa-tʉ̲	'there' (vis.)
tʉvʉ-pʉ-vwa-n	'on earth'
'u-vwaa-tʉ̲	'there' (invis.)
'i-vee-tʉ̲	'here'

6. There is considerable evidence suggesting that labialization and palatalization were a general phonological process in Ute, not confined to only suffixes but also taking place inside lexical stems.

b. **With the irrealis suffix /-vaa/**:

káa-**vaa**-ni	'(s/he) will sing'
karʉ-**v**waa-ni	'(s/he) will be sitting'
pɵ'ɵ-**v**waa-ni	'(s/he) will write'
tʉsu-**v**waa-ni	'(s/he) will grind'
'avi-**vee**-ni	'(s/he) will be lying down'

1.4. Hyphenation conventions

Ute is a morphologically complex language, so that most words – be they nouns, adjectives or verbs – have a complex internal structure. That is, they are made of multiple sub-parts, lexical stems augmented with grammatical or derivational morphemes. In listing Ute words in the dictionary, we have elected to place hyphens between the parts of words, be they compounded lexical stems or small-size grammatical or derivational morphemes. This is done in order to make as clear as possible the internal structure of the words. Such a practice also makes it possible to trace the relations – be they grammatical, derivational or historical – between Ute words. In informal writing, fluent writers may choose to dispense with such hyphenation.

CHAPTER 2

Word classes and word structure

2.1. Lexical words and grammatical morphemes

The distinction between lexical words (or word-stems) and grammatical morphemes is fundamental to any language. One may distinguish between these two by noting first their starkly different functions. Lexical words code our culturally-shared knowledge of the **universe of experience**; that is, the types of states or events we encounter, and the types of entities that partake in those states or events. This universe of experience does not encompass only physical reality ('woman', 'cat', 'tree', 'rock', 'water', 'hill', 'red', 'large', 'eating', 'breaking', 'running', etc.), but also social and cultural concepts ('husband', 'medicine-man', 'celebration', 'courting', 'chief', 'lawful', 'polite', 'mediating', 'marriage', etc.). It also encompasses mental processes ('mind', 'love', 'fear', 'hate', 'painful', 'suspicious', 'wanting', 'knowing', 'expecting', etc.). Such culturally-shared knowledge of our universe of experience tends to determine the **contents** of communication, what we communicate **about**.

Grammatical morphemes, on the other hand, are not about the universe of experience, but about the **communicative process** itself. They are not about the contents but rather about the **mechanics** of communication.

As a down-to-earth diagnostic, the following cluster of criteria distinguish lexical words from grammatical morphemes.

Table 1. Words vs. morphemes

criterion:	**words**	**morphemes**
a. **morphemic status**:	free	bound
b. **phonological size**:	large	small
c. **stress**:	stressed	unstressed
d. **semantic size**:	large	small
e. **class size**:	large	small
f. **class membership**:	open	closed
g. **function**:	world-view	grammar or word-derivation

We will take these criteria in order.

- **Morphemic status**:
Lexical words tend to be free independent words, although in a language like Ute they seldom appear without some bound morphemes attached to them. Morphemes tend to be bound, i.e., **prefixes** or **suffixes** attached to some lexical **word-stem**.
- **Phonological size**: Lexical words tend to be larger (longer). Morphemes tend to be smaller (shorter).
- **Stress**: Lexical words tend to carry prominent intonation or stress. Morphemes tend to go unstressed.
- **Semantic size**: Lexical words tend to be semantically complex. That is, they are clusters of many semantic features. Each lexical word is thus a member of many semantic fields. Morphemes tend to be semantically simpler, more classificatory and more abstract. Often they code a single feature or a small cluster of features.
- **Class size**: Lexical words come in a few large classes. Grammatical or derivational morphemes come in many small classes.
- **Membership**: The membership of lexical classes is relatively open. New members may be added and old members dropped as new words are coined or the meanings of old words change. Cultural change is the prime cause of adding or dropping lexical vocabulary. The membership of grammatical classes, on the other hand, is relatively stable and closed. Adding or dropping of members is possible, but happens much more slowly. And changes in the membership of morpheme classes do not reflect cultural (world-view) changes, but rather changes in the communication system.

In this chapter, the description of grammatical morphology will be somewhat abbreviated, since the bulk of the information about Ute grammatical morphemes, and the grammatical constructions in which they partake, is found in our *Ute Reference Grammar*.[1]

2.2. Word classes

2.2.1. Membership criteria

The four major lexical word-classes in Ute are nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs. We distinguish them by a cluster of three major criteria that *tend to* – but don't always – coincide. These criteria are:

1. We will refer repeatedly below to specific chapters of the *Ute Reference Grammar* (Givón 2011; henceforth *URG*), where more information about various aspects of Ute grammar can be found.

- **Semantics**: The kind of meanings that tend to be coded by a particular word-class.
- **Syntax**: The typical position(s) in the clause that words of a particular class occupy.
- **Morphology**: The kind of bound morphemes – either grammatical or derivational – that are typically affixed to words of a particular class.

Like other natural types, word-classes include members that are prototypical and abide by all membership criteria, and members that are less prototypical.

2.2.2. Nouns [n]

2.2.2.1. Semantic properties

The traditional definition of a noun as 'a name of a person, place or thing' is intuitively appealing but imprecise. To begin with, a noun is not a name of an individual entity but the label for a **class** of entities. The most common semantic characteristics of the prototype 'noun' are given directly below, but many nouns are semantically less prototypical while still conforming to the class's syntactic and morphological membership criteria.

- **Durability**: Prototypical nouns tend to code entities that are durable. That is, they tend to be physical objects whose cluster of properties (size, shape, color, hardness, consistency, component materials, component parts, use) do not change rapidly over time. If it is a chair, a child, a rock, a woman, a horse, a hill, a star, sand, wind or water right now, it will most likely still be the same type of entity in five minutes from now, or in a month, or a year. Though of course, a child may change faster than a tree, a tree faster that a house, and a house faster than a rock.
- **Complexity**: One important reason for the relative durability of prototypical nouns is that each noun codes a **cluster of properties**. Thus, the noun 'horse' has prototypical size, shape, color, weight, sound, smell, part-whole composition, behaviors and cultural uses. So when a horse happens to be uncharacteristically small, or pink, or with exceptionally long ears, or missing a leg, or too wild to ride, the presence of the other features insures that it is still a horse.
- **Concreteness**: The durability of prototypical nouns also owes much to the fact that they are concrete (physical), and made out of relatively durable materials. Each of the bundled properties (size, color, shape, etc.) changes relatively slowly on its own.
- **Compactness**: Prototypical nouns tend to be compact in space rather than scattered all over the map. The sub-parts of a prototypical noun tend to occupy **contiguous space**. Spatially-scattered nouns such as 'celebration', 'Tuesday', 'rain', 'sand', 'crowd' or 'nation' do exist, but they are not the most prototypical.

• **Individuation**: One consequence of the prototype noun being spatially compact is that it tends to appear as a relatively small **figure** vis-a-vis the vast **ground** that surrounds and frames it. Again, some nouns may occupy a larger portion of the ground ('rain', 'ocean', 'sky', 'mountain'). Or they may be undivided masses ('water', 'sand', 'blood', 'air'). But those are not prototypical.

2.2.2.2. Syntactic properties

By syntactic properties we mean the **distribution** of nouns in well-defined slots inside the clause. Since we have not yet described the syntactic structure of Ute clauses, the discussion here will be somwhat informal.[2] Nouns occupy five major syntactic positions in the clause. First and second, the positions of **subject** (S) and **direct object** (O), as in:

(1) ta'wachi sivaatuchi paqha-qa
man/**S** goat/**O** kill-ANT
'**The man** killed **a goat**'

Third, the position of **indirect object** marked by a post-position, as in:

(2) múusachi kani-**náagha-tukhwa** yʉga-pʉga
cat/S house/**O-in-to** enter-REM
'The cat went **into the house**'

Fourth, the position of nominal **predicate**, as in:

(3) 'icha-'ara pɵ'ɵkwatʉ 'ura-'ay
this/S-be book/**PRED** be-IMM
'This is **a book**'

And fifth, the position of **possessor** (genitive) modifier in the noun phrase, as in:

(4) 'áapach**i** pɵ'ɵ-kwa-tʉ tʉ́ʉ'atʉ
boy/**POSS** book/S good
'**The boy's** book is good'

2.2.2.3. Morphological properties

2.2.2.3.1. Noun suffixes and noun classes

The vast majority of Ute nouns come with their inherent **noun suffix**. Such suffixes bear the unmistakable footprints of having been, at some time in the distant past, a coherent **noun-classifier** system. As in the case of many other languages, the semantic basis of the noun classification in Ute has been largely

2. See *URG*, ch. 4, as well as Section 2.2.6.2. below.

obliterated, but clear traces of some of its earlier features are still visible, either in the strong association of particular semantic features with particular suffixes, or in the consistent derivational use of some suffixes.[3]

In addition to their now-largely submerged semantic classificatory role, Ute noun suffixes also play several important grammatical roles, most conspicuously in marking the grammatical role of nouns in the clause.[4] We will discuss the various noun suffixes in order.

(a) **The animate suffix -*chi***

The vast majority of nouns in this class are animates – humans or other sentient beings. Thus consider:

(5)

humans	**kin terms**	**other animates**
núu-chi̲ 'person','Ute'	tua-chi-n 'my child'	múusa-chi̲ 'cat'
mama-chi̲ 'woman'	togho-chi-n 'my grandfather' (pat.)	sari-chi̲ 'dog'
ta'wa-chi̲ 'man'	kʉnuu-chi-n 'my grandfather' (mat.)	múupʉ-chi̲ 'owl'
na'achi-chi̲ 'girl'	kagu-chi-n 'my grandmother' (pat.)	kwana-chi̲ 'eagle'
'áapa-chi̲ 'boy'	wh̲cii-chi-n 'my grandmother' (mat.)	pawi-chi̲ 'beaver'
kʉma-chi̲ 'stranger'	pavi-chi-n 'my older brother'	pa'acha̲'a-chi̲ 'bat'
mʉrʉká-chi̲ 'Whiteman'	'áa-chi-n 'my father's younger brother'	wichi-chi̲ 'bird'

There are, however, many exceptions to this semantically-most-consistent class. Quite a few animate nouns take the suffixes -**vi**/-**pi** or -**tʉ**/-**rʉ** (see below). And others come without an inherent suffix, as in:

(6) púku̲ 'horse', kúchu̲ 'buffalo', túku̲ 'cougar' tɵchay'a̲ 'prairie dog'
pagʉ 'fish', 'áya̲ 'turtle', pachukwi̲ 'otter' cha̲kur'a̲ 'crane'

Several old kinship terms also come without a suffix, as in:

(7) pʉ́a-n 'my kin' múa-n 'my father' pía-n 'my mother'
piwa-n 'my spouse'

And lastly, quite a few inanimate nouns are marked with the suffix -***chi***, as in e.g.:

(8) kawa-chi̲ 'frost' saghwa-chi̲ 'greenery' tʉ̲pʉy-chi̲ 'rock'
wii-chi̲ 'knife' pʊ̲tɵ'ni-chi̲ 'mound' 'áa-chi̲ 'bow'

3. See Chapter 3 below, or *URG*, ch. 19.

4. See Section 2.2.2.3.3. below, as well as *URG*, chs 4,5.

(b) **The suffix *-pi/-vi***

Many nouns marked with this suffix are either animates or body parts, as in:

(9)

human	animate	body parts
sinawa-vi̲ 'the Creator'	pía-pi̲ 'female'	pʉ'i–vi̲ 'eye'
ta'wa-vi̲ 'chief'	kumaa-vi̲ 'male'	nʉka-vi̲ 'ear'
tatawaa-vi̲ 'male in-law'	toghoa-vi̲ 'rattlesnake'	ma-sʉʉ-vi̲ 'finger'
náe-vi̲ 'teenage girl'	múua-vi̲ 'fly'	wa'a-pi̲ 'penis'

But other body parts take the suffix ***-pʉ/-vʉ***, as in:

(10)

məvət'ə-pʉ̲	'nose'	wʉgʉ-pʉ̲	'vagina'	pʉʉ-vʉ̲	'fur'
'áa-pʉ̲	'horn'	páa-pʉ̲	'blood'	məchə-pʉ̲	'mustache'

And some inanimates also take the ***-pi/-vi*** suffix, as in:[5]

(11) káa-vi̲ 'mountain(s)' ma'a-vi̲ 'vegetation' tə́ənа-pi̲ 'wild cherries'

Lastly, the ***-pi/-vi*** suffix also has a derivational use, converting verbs into nouns, as in:[6]

(12)

verb		derived noun
'apagha- 'speak'	>	'apagha-pi̲ 'language', 'speech'
tʉka- 'eat'	>	tʉka-pi̲ 'food'
sumua- 'forget'	>	sumua-pi̲ 'something forgotten'

(c) **The suffix -tʉ/-rʉ**

This suffix is used extensively to derive nouns from verbs. The original function of this suffix was probably to mark **subject nominalizations**; that is, indicate the performer of the action. Several sub-patterns are productive in deriving new nouns with this suffix. The first involves the *habitual* verb suffix ***-mi***, imparting the sens of **habitual performer**, as in:[7]

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5. The use of the *-pi/-vi* suffix with inanimate nouns and *-pʉ/-vʉ* on animates or body-parts may be due to confusion created by the voiceless final vowels in the subject form of nouns, the most frequent in usage and also the general citation form.

6. See ch. 3 below as well as *URG*, ch. 19.

7. See ch. 3 below as well as *URG*, ch. 19.